

death that fluid usually contains crystals in great numbers; it also contains very regular filaments, which unite in great numbers, so as to form small bands, which are always found unaltered in the alvine dejections.—*Gazette Médical de Paris*.

14. *Spontaneous Rupture of the Heart*.—Dr. MAYER relates in his *Med. Pract. Abhand.*, the following interesting example of this rare accident. As a peasant was employed with several labourers in landing timber from a raft, a rope broke, and one of the beams fell back with such violence on the float, that the peasant, without being touched by the beam, fell from the shock into the water, and although he was taken out immediately, expired after a few gasps.—*Autopsy*. The cavity of the chest contained at least five pounds of dark fluid blood, which had gushed from a rent in the pericardium, near the point where the aorta escapes. The pericardium was distended with a similar fluid. On closer examination, complete rupture of the heart was discovered, dividing it into halves, a right upper and smaller, and a left, inferior, and larger half, only connected by an isthmus an inch in diameter. The substance of the heart, with the exception of a slight thinning of the walls of the right ventricle, was perfectly healthy, and not a trace of aneurismatic enlargement was discovered in the vessels.—*B. Ann. Med.* from KLEINERT's *Report*, Dec. 1836.

15. *On the nature of Mucus, and discharges from the Urino-genital organs*.—M. AL. DONNÉ has lately published an account of some interesting microscopic researches as to the nature of mucus and the different discharges from the urino-genital organs. He has been led by them to the following conclusions:—

1. The pus of urethral gonorrhœa appears to be the same both in men and in women; it is alkaline, and presents the appearances of common phlegmonous pus. It contains no animalcules.

2. The pus from chancres of the glans and of the vulva is alkaline. Its globules are less clear than those of other pus. It is also alone capable of producing true pustules and chancre by inoculation.

3. The sebaceous secretion of the prepuce is alkaline. No animalcules are developed in the pus formed by the application of a blister to the glans of a non-syphilitic patient.

4. The pus of buboes is alkaline, and never contains animalcules.

5. The mucus of the vagina is in its healthy state acid, and composed of pelli-cles of a peculiar form. It never contains animalcules unless in an unhealthy state.

6. The discharges from the vagina are either simply mucous or are purulent.

7. Mucous discharge constitutes *vaginitis*, or vaginal leucorrhœa. It never contains any animalcules.

8. Purulent discharge constitutes vaginal gonorrhœa: in it are found the new animalcules which M. Donn  has described under the name of *Trichomonas vaginalis*.

9. The acidity of the vaginal mucus, and the presence of animalcules in it, perhaps contribute to diseases of the neck of the uterus.

10. Uterine mucus is always alkaline, which distinguishes it from that of the vagina. In its healthy state it is not opaque and presents no globules: in affections of the neck or body of the uterus it becomes muco-purulent, but never produces animalcules.

11. Balsam of copaiba and cubebs, mixed with butter or chocolate, may be administered with advantage in gonorrhœa, in the form of solid cones introduced into the rectum.

MATERIA MEDICA AND GENERAL THERAPEUTICS.

16. *Physiological and Therapeutical properties of pure Tannin*.—M. CAVARRA, having previously ascertained by experiments on dogs, that pure tannin possesses no poisonous qualities, took himself three pills, each containing two and a half grains, for three successive days. Obstinate constipation was the consequence, which lasted for eight days, and was only then relieved by the administration of

two drops of croton oil. An exactly similar effect was produced on two other healthy individuals, who took the tannin in the same dose.

It now remained to determine, if possible, in what way tannin produces so powerful an effect on the mucous membrane of the intestinal canal. A dog, in which the maximum of constipation had been attained by giving large doses of tannin, was killed. The intestinal mucous membrane was found to be dry. The fecal matter was extremely hard, and, as it were, adherent to the sides of the colon. On examining the surface of the mucous membrane of that organ with a strong magnifier, the villousities and their pores were found considerably contracted. From these, and several other experiments, the author concludes, that tannin acts chemically on the intestinal mucous surface, in the same way that it acts on the skin of an animal, and produces constipation by the restriction which it causes in the secreting parts or tissues.

The superiority of pure tannin over such substances as contain it in greater or less quantity, (*nux. gal.*, &c.) is incontestible. Its relative power is much superior, but experience alone could decide whether pure tannin possessed any medicinal properties or not. The first experiment which the author made, was on a lady who was affected with diarrhœa, of an obstinate nature, for sixteen months. Every kind of treatment, including astringents, had been tried, without success. After the administration of five pills, each containing a quarter of a grain, the diarrhœa completely disappeared, and, in addition, the lady found herself cured of a leucorrhœa, with which she had been affected for the last eighteen years. It is now a year since this lady has been cured, and she continues to enjoy perfect health.

This first experiment proves that tannin acts not only on the mucous membrane with which it is in contact, but also exercises a marked influence on all the mucous membranes of the body. Other cases soon confirmed this conclusion. Thus, a young woman, who was affected with chronic pulmonary catarrh, was cured with six grains, administered in the dose of a quarter of a grain per day. It would be impossible to give an account here of all the cases of diarrhœa, catarrh, &c., which have been cured under the hands of the author by the use of tannin. We shall, therefore, content ourselves by simply transcribing the conclusions to which the experiments of M. Cavarra, with this new medicinal agent, have conducted him.

1st, That pure tannin, by producing a degree of impermeability of the mucous membrane, and also by its action on the nervous system, cures diarrhœa, leucorrhœa, and chronic catarrh.

2nd, That its efficacy in hæmoptysis, uterine hæmorrhage, and gonorrhœa, is also well demonstrated. The author reports having cured two old claps, one dating fifteen, the other twenty years.

Tannin may be given in the form of pill, or lavement, or as a draught, and in the dose of from a quarter to two grains, without producing any unpleasant constipation, but its effects must be observed with a little care.—*Bulletin Gén. de Therap.*, March 30, 1837.

17. *Tartar Emetic.*—Drs. CRICHTON and MAYER, observed an extraordinary effect of tartar emetic in a girl, aged 14, who had taken ten grains within a fortnight. Some days after this remedy had been discontinued, a pustular eruption appeared, exceedingly like the exanthem breaking out after the external application of tartarized antimony. In three individuals who, during their complaints, had had a strong tartar emetic ointment rubbed on the abdomen, small pocklike pustules were found on the internal surface of the peritoneum after death.—*Brit. Ann. Med. from Medico Pract. Abhand.* B. 1.

18. *Phlorizine.*—M. de KONINCK has discovered a new medicine to which he has given the above name. It is an extract from the bark of the apple tree, and is obtained in the following manner:—Place the fresh bark of the roots of apple trees in a pipkin, covered with water, and leave it to simmer for five hours; then strain, and put the same quantity of water again on the bark; simmer an hour or two; then strain while hot, and leave it in different vessels for 36 hours; a great quantity of phlorizine will then be found at the bottom, and on the sides of the vessel there is a sort of granite, more or less dark. Collect and dissolve it, and let

it crystallize several times; it will then be quite purified. Or, pour weak spirits of wine over fresh bark; expose to the air for eight hours, in a temperature of 60 deg. This operation is to be performed once or twice, the liquor is mixed and distilled, and thus the greatest part of the alcohol is retained. Leave the drugs to cool, and on the next day there is much phlorizine, crystallized, as in the first process, but much clearer. At the hospital in Brussels, from 10 to 14 grains, with a drachm of sugar, in one dose, given for intermittent fever, produced the most marked success where quinine had failed.—*Continental and Brit. Rev.*

19. *Parsley juice as a substitute for quinine.*—Dr. POTT has long employed parsley juice in intermittent fevers, as a substitute for quinine. The juice is extracted thus:—Chop and then pound a handful of fresh parsley, pour an ounce of water over it; pound it again; pour the whole on a wet linen rag, and then wring out the sap over a vessel. Three ounces to be taken at two different times, a few hours before the fever comes on. Intermittents not cured by quinine have been completely so by this remedy. It has been prescribed in various other diseases, and although nearly erased from the pharmacopœia, Dr. Pott's observations may perhaps restore it to favour.—*Ibid.*

SPECIAL PATHOLOGY AND SPECIAL THERAPEUTICS.

20. *Enlargement of the Thymus Gland.* It would appear from recent investigations that the sudden paroxysms of suffocation, sometimes terminating fatally, which occasionally attack infants, are caused by enlargement of the Thymus Gland. In addition to the cases adduced by Dr. Montgomery, Hirsch, Kopp, Roesch and of our correspondent Dr. Roberts of New York (see our three preceding No.'s) we find in the *Berlin Med. Zeit.* (No.'s 47 and 48) two cases related by Dr. MALIN, and in the *Lancet* of 20th of May, 1837, a third by Mr. WM. HUGHES, all confirmative of the pathological view to which we have alluded. The first case described by Dr. Malin occurred in a child seven months of age. The infant enjoyed good health, but the nurse remarked that it frequently screamed acutely, without having any apparent cause of suffering. In a short time the infant was seized with fits of suffocation, coming on at irregular intervals, without any determinate exciting cause, and during which respiration seemed to be entirely suspended. The fit commenced with some quick interrupted efforts at respiration; the face then became of a dark red hue. Soon afterwards the respiration was entirely suspended, and the child lay without pulse, and excessively cold, for one or two minutes, when the paroxysm terminated by a very characteristic cry. The various remedies which were employed were attended with no benefit whatever; the paroxysms returned with increased frequency, and the child fell a victim to the intensity of the disease, about three weeks after its first appearance.

On examining the body, Dr. Malin found the thymus gland so excessively enlarged that it filled the whole of the anterior mediastinum; its colour was pale red, and it resembled the liver in structure. The upper edge was in contact with the thyroid gland, while the posterior one, of a pointed shape, was closely attached by cellular substance to the arch of the aorta. The inferior part of the thymus gland covered the whole of the apex of the heart, prevented its pulsation against the ribs, and hence rendered it almost impossible to hear the beating of the heart during the last few weeks of the patient's life. It weighed 7 drachms, 10 grains, and had pushed back the lungs against the posterior wall of the chest. When cut into, and submitted to strong pressure, a small quantity of a milky-looking slime was discharged. The substance of the heart, and especially the left ventricle, seemed very soft. With this exception, nothing abnormal was observed in the cavity of the heart.

The second case was a girl four years of age who had suffered for several months under an attack of hooping-cough, from which, however, she recovered without any medical assistance. Since then the child was subject to paroxysms and difficulty of breathing, coming on suddenly during the night, and compelling the little patient, whose countenance assumed a bluish tint, to assume an upright